Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act

Progress Report 2012

NOVA SCOTIA

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Cover photo: Tobeatic Wilderness Area (Oliver Maass)

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Message from the Minister

I am pleased to present the 2011–2012 *Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act* (EGSPA) report.

The Act is one of several pieces of legislation that guides our work at Nova Scotia Environment. It is this government's aim to create one of the most environmentally sustainable and healthiest environments in the world, while growing our economy.

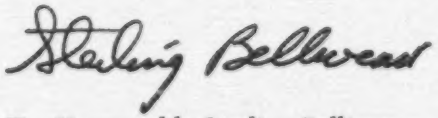
I am pleased to see the continued support of government partners, industry and community stakeholders as we work together to reach, and even exceed, our EGSPA targets.

Over the past year, Nova Scotia has continued to make progress reducing our greenhouse gas and air pollution emissions. We tabled a wetlands strategy and a regulatory framework for contaminated sites, meeting two more of our legislated targets. Progress has been made on legally protecting 12 per cent of our land by 2015.

Thank you to the Minister's Round Table on Environment and Sustainable Prosperity for carrying out the first review of EGSPA, which is mandated to take place every five years. We are reviewing their suggestions on ways to improve the Act, and hope to bring legislation forward in the fall of 2012. The review documents can be found at www.gov.ns.ca/nse/dept/egspa.review.asp.

Nova Scotia is viewed as a leader in protecting the environment. This leadership was recently endorsed by the Government of Canada's announcement that it would sign an equivalency agreement with Nova Scotia allowing the province to use its own regulatory approach for meeting federal regulations on GHG reductions. The federal reduction targets will be met but at a lower cost to Nova Scotians.

As this government continues meeting the goals set forth in EGSPA, we do so with a continued desire to protect our environment and the health of Nova Scotians for our children and their children.



The Honourable Sterling Belliveau
Minister of Environment

Introduction

The *Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act* (EGSPA) is a unique piece of legislation that recognizes the importance of integrating environmental sustainability and economic prosperity. The legislation sets out 21 goals and two overarching objectives that are to be reached by 2020. This report provides an update on the progress made in achieving the goals over the last year. Government has made significant progress, achieving 14 of the 21 goals to date.

Over the last year, the Round Table on Environment and Sustainable Prosperity carried out a review of the legislation, presenting their report to the Minister in March on potential amendments and improvements to the Act. Government is reviewing and analyzing the report, which can be found at www.gov.ns.ca/nse/dept/egspa.review.asp.

Progress Highlights 2011

The Province met four EGSPA goals in 2011-2012.

- "The Path We Share, A Natural Resources Strategy for Nova Scotia, 2011–2020"was released in August 2011. The strategy will guide the sustainable management of Nova Scotia's biodiversity, forests, geological resources and provincial parks.

- In October 2011, the Province released the Wetlands Conservation Policy, which will ensure that we protect these important ecosystems by working toward preventing the net loss of wetlands.

- In March 2012, the Province released new contaminated sites regulations. The new regulations will encourage the clean-up and redevelopment of contaminated sites, which will better protect our environment.

- As of December 2011, all septage treatment facilities operating in the province were in compliance with the Guidelines for Handling Treatment and Disposal of Septage, fulfilling another EGSPA goal.

In addition to meeting four goals this year, continued efforts were made toward achieving the remaining seven goals. Highlights include the release of "Our Path Forward: Building on the success of Nova Scotia's Solid Waste Resource Management Strategy" in September 2011. The strategy outlines how the province will further reduce waste and increase recycling, helping to move the Province towards the disposal goal of no more than 300 kilograms per person-per year. In October 2011, the Province designated land near Halifax as Five Bridge Lakes Wilderness Area and also legally protected lands owned by the Bras d'Or Preservation Nature Trust near Baddeck as the Mary Harper Nature Reserve. This helped move the province to 8.8 per cent in its goal to protect 12 per cent by 2015.

EGSPA Objectives

In addition to the 21 environmental goals, the Act emphasizes the importance of integrating environmental sustainability and economic prosperity through two high-level objectives (see text box). To track how we are doing in achieving these objectives, a set of high level indicators of prosperity have been developed. These indicators track trends over time in Nova Scotia and across Canada. More details on the indicators of prosperity are available in a separate report at www.gov.ns.ca/nse/egspa/.

4(1) The long-term environmental and economic objective of the Province is to fully integrate environmental sustainability and economic prosperity and to this end to:

4(1)(a) demonstrate international leadership by having one of the cleanest and most sustainable environments in the world by the year 2020

4(1)(b) provide certainty to all sectors of the economy through the Government's economic development strategy entitled Opportunities for Sustainable Prosperity and establish clear environmental goals while improving the Province's economic performance to a level that is equal to or above the Canadian average by the year 2020.

The Goals

4(2) To achieve the long-term objectives set forth in subsection one, the Province's environmental and economic goals are to ensure **1) a sustainable environment** and **2) economic prosperity**.

1. Sustainable Environment

ECOSYSTEM PROTECTION

Sustainability managing and protecting our most valuable assets — our natural resources.

Goal	The Province will adopt strategies to ensure the sustainability of the Province's natural capital in the areas of forestry, mining, parks and biodiversity by the year 2010.
Where are we now?	"The Path We Share, A Natural Resources Strategy for Nova Scotia 2011–2020" was released on August 16, 2011. The strategy includes 23 goals and more than 90 actions. The companion document, "From Strategy to Action," lays out 32 specific time-bound actions to be implemented in the first 24 months.
What's next?	Work is well underway on these actions and regular reporting will be done on the progress.

GOAL ✔ ACHIEVED

Goal	Twelve per cent of the total land mass of the Province will be legally protected by the year 2015.
Where are we now?	As of December 31, 2011, a total of 8.8 per cent (or 484,800 hectares) of the province was legally protected, up from 8.6 per cent in 2010. In October 2011, the Province designated land near Halifax as Five Bridge Lakes Wilderness Area and also legally protected lands owned by the Bras d'Or Preservation Nature Trust near Baddeck as Mary Harper Nature Reserve. Public consultation was carried out on over 200,000 hectares of potential 12 per cent lands.
What's next?	A draft plan on reaching our 12 per cent goal will be released in late 2012.

GOAL IN PROGRESS

WATER QUALITY

Restoring and managing our precious water resources.

Goal	A comprehensive water-resource management strategy will be developed by the year 2010.
Where are we now?	In March 2012 the first annual progress report was released for "Water for Life: Nova Scotia's Water Resource Management Strategy": www.gov.ns.ca/nse/water/docs/Water.For.Life.Progress.Report.2012.pdf.
What's next?	In the Fall of 2012 an inventory of Water Strategy Projects will be completed, along with an update of the interdepartmental Water Strategy Implementation Committee's (WSIC) Implementation Plan. Work will continue with all departments and all levels of government to implement the strategy.

GOAL ✓ ACHIEVED

Goal	Municipal public drinking-water supplies will meet the Province's treatment standards by the year 2008.
Where are we now?	As of March 31, 2012, 86 per cent of the municipal public drinking water supplies met the treatment standards, an increase of 11 per cent over last year. Ninety-eight per cent of the population served by municipalities has access to water that meets the standards.
What's next?	The Province will continue to assist municipalities to obtain the necessary funding to make upgrades, work with municipalities to develop drinking water treatment compliance strategies and conduct regular audits of public drinking water supplies to ensure standards are met.

GOAL IN PROGRESS

Goal	A policy of preventing net loss of wetlands will be established by the year 2009.
Where are we now?	The Wetlands Conservation Policy was released on October 14, 2011.
What's next?	Implementation of the policy is ongoing. Field staff are being trained and information is being developed to provide clarity around the policy.

GOAL ✓ ACHIEVED

WATER QUALITY (continued)

Goal	Septage treatment facilities will be operated in accordance with the Guidelines for the Handling, Treatment and Disposal of Septage by the year 2011.
Where are we now?	As of December 2011, all septage treatment facilities currently operating in the province are in compliance with the guidelines.
What's next?	In 2012, all 20 facilities will have obtained ten-year approvals. Seven sites are closed or in the process of closing. The Province will continue to monitor to ensure that sites continue to meet the guidelines.

GOAL ✓ ACHIEVED

Goal	Wastewater treatment facility discharges will be provided at least primary treatment by the year 2017.
Where are we now?	As of March 2012, 91 per cent of municipal wastewater facilities met the target.
What's next?	Government will continue to work with municipalities on implementing the Canada-wide Municipal Wastewater Effluent Strategy.

GOAL IN PROGRESS

CLIMATE CHANGE

Doing our part to fight climate change.

Goal	Greenhouse gas emissions will be at least ten per cent below the levels that were emitted in the year 1990 by the year 2020, as outlined in the New England Governors and Eastern Canadian Premiers Climate Change Action Plan of 2001.
Where are we now?	GHG output in 2010 is estimated to have been 20.1 Mtonnes[1], which was only 5.2 per cent above 1990 levels. This continues a declining trend in GHG output. The decline in our GHG output has been due to several factors, including the increasing price of oil, but mainly the EGSPA mandate and subsequent Climate Change Action Plan, which led to the regulation of electricity GHG in 2009.
What's next?	Government will continue its work in reducing GHGs and meeting renewables and energy efficiency targets.

GOAL IN PROGRESS

AIR QUALITY

Doing our part to improve the air we breathe.

Goal	The Province will adopt emissions standards for greenhouse gases and air pollutants from new motor vehicles, such as the standards adopted by the State of California by the year 2010.
Where are we now?	On October 1, 2010, the Government of Canada announced more stringent Passenger Automobile and Light Truck Greenhouse Gas Emission Regulations (under CEPA) for new passenger automobiles and light trucks for the 2011–2016 model years.
What's next?	Canada is working on post-2017 GHG standards, and new standards for Heavy Duty Vehicles: www.ec.gc.ca/lcpe-cepa/default.asp?lang=En&n=F24B936F-1. Canada is also working to develop and implement air pollutant emission regulations for various classes of on-road vehicles. The Province will continue to work with federal/provincial/territorial governments on national standards.

GOAL ✔ ACHIEVED

1 Estimates provided by the Climate Change Directorate, Nova Scotia Environment.

AIR QUALITY (continued)

Goal	Emissions of nitrogen oxides will be reduced by twenty per cent by the year 2009 relative to emissions in the year 2000.
Where are we now?	The nitrogen oxide (NO_x) emissions reported from 2011 met and surpassed the reduction target at 18,013 tonnes or 32.6 per cent below NO_x emissions in 2000. In 2010 emissions were 31.7 per cent below NO_x emissions in 2000. The Province will work with Nova Scotia Power Inc. to ensure the target continues to be met.
What's next?	The Province will participate in national efforts to establish emission requirements for the electricity sector. Reductions have been added to the Air Quality Regulations for 2015 (25 per cent reduction from 2000) and 2020 (44 per cent reduction from 2000).

GOAL ✔ ACHIEVED

Goal	Sulphur dioxide emissions will be reduced by fifty per cent by the year 2010 from sources existing in 2001.
Where are we now?	Sulphur dioxide (SO_2) emissions for 2010 were 69,234 tonnes or 53 per cent below emission from sources existing in 2001.[2] The complete data for 2011 will be available in the fall of 2012; however, emissions from Nova Scotia Power Inc. (NSPI), which accounted for 89 per cent of the total emissions in 2010, have been recorded as 64,812 tonnes. An assessment of the effectiveness of efforts to reduce SO_2 was completed in 2011.
What's next?	The Province will continue to work with NSPI to ensure they remain within their SO_2 limit, and will participate in national work to establish emission requirements for the electricity sector. Reductions have been added to the Air Quality Regulations for 2015 (58 per cent reduction from 2001) and 2020 (75 per cent reduction from 2001).

GOAL ✔ ACHIEVED

2 In previous reports, the sulphur dioxide emissions reported were from all sources. This year we are only reporting on emitters with greater than 90 tonnes of SO_2 emissions per year as this is the actual EGSPA target.

AIR QUALITY (continued)

Goal	Mercury emissions will be reduced by seventy per cent by the year 2010 relative to pre-2001 levels.	
Where are we now?	On December 9, 2010, the Province announced that it would amend the Air Quality Regulations to defer the 2010 emission target of 65 kg until 2014 to limit the impact on power costs. Regulated emission levels will continue to decline from 2010 to 2013, and Nova Scotia Power Inc. (NSPI) will be required to make additional emission reductions by 2020 to offset any emissions over 65 kg in the 2010–13 period. NSPI will be required to meet a 35 kg target in 2020. Mercury emissions for 2011 were 94.6 kg, which was below the permitted limit of 100 kg. In 2010 emission levels were 81.5 kg, which was below the permitted limit of 110 kg.	MODIFIED GOAL IN PROGRESS
What's next?	The Province will continue to work with NSPI to reduce its mercury emissions.	

Goal	The Province will meet the Canada-wide standard established by the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment for airborne fine-particulate matter by the year 2010.	
Where are we now?	The Canada-wide standard for airborne fine-particulate matter ($PM_{2.5}$) has consistently been met in the Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM). While it is expected that Cape Breton Regional Municipality is also meeting the standard, results cannot be calculated at the present time due to insufficient data. For 2009–2011, preliminary data for HRM is 16 µg/m³. The target is 30 µg/m³ or less.	GOAL ✓ ACHIEVED
What's next?	The Province will continue to implement its Canada-wide standard implementation plan and work with national committees to improve monitoring.	

AIR QUALITY (continued)

Goal	The Province will meet the Canada-wide standard established by the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment for ground-level ozone by the year 2010.
Where are we now?	The Canada-wide standard for ground-level ozone is consistently being met for the Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) and Cape Breton Regional Municipality (CBRM). Preliminary data for 2009–2011 for HRM is 52 ppb and for CBRM is 50 ppb. The target is 65 ppb or less.
What's next?	The Province will continue to implement its Canada-wide standard implementation plan.

GOAL ✔ ACHIEVED

RENEWABLE ENERGY

Tapping into nature's source of energy.

Goal	Eighteen and one-half per cent of the total electricity needs of the Province will be obtained from renewable energy sources by the year 2013.
Where are we now?	In 2011, 17.4 per cent of electricity generation was from renewable energy resources, up from 13.5 per cent in 2010. In 2011, Nova Scotia Power Inc. (NSPI) added 44 MW of new renewable resources, primarily due to the completion of the Glen Dhu project. The Community Feed-in Tariff (COMFIT) program approved the first projects in December 2011.
What's next?	The Province will continue to enforce the Renewable Energy Standard Regulations, support efforts by NSPI to acquire renewable energy supplies, continue the tidal energy demonstration project on the Bay of Fundy, and continue to research and encourage investment in electricity from renewable energy sources.

GOAL IN PROGRESS

ENERGY EFFICIENT BUILDINGS

Saving money and energy in our buildings at work, home, and play.

Goal	All new residential dwelling units constructed in the Province will be required to achieve an EnerGuide rating of 80, or meet energy conservation measures adopted in the Nova Scotia Building Code Regulations made under the *Building Code Act* after January 1, 2011.
Where are we now?	Energy efficiency amendments were made to the *Building Code Act* in December 2009: one year earlier than required. These exceed the EGSPA target, and apply to new home construction, home additions, and major renovations, as well as commercial buildings under 600 square meters. All manufactured housing products meet or exceed the energy conservation measures.
What's next?	The Province participated in a review of new energy efficiency measures to be adopted in the National Building Code of Canada. These proposed changes will introduce measures at least equivalent to those adopted in 2009, and achieve a national standard.

GOAL ✔ ACHIEVED

Goal	All new residential dwelling units constructed in the Province that are within the scope of Part 9 of the National Building Code of Canada will be required to display an EnerGuide rating by the year 2008.
Where are we now?	Following consultation with stakeholders, mandatory labeling of new homes has been replaced with a choice of either performance based or prescriptive energy efficiency requirements that were adopted in the Provincial Building Code in December 2009. These requirements apply to both new single family homes and all small buildings built under Part 9 of the National Building Code.
What's next?	Natural Resources Canada is expected to release a new energy rating system for public review in the spring of 2012. The proposed new rating system would make a low cost rating and label available for both new and existing homes.

GOAL ✔ ACHIEVED

ENERGY EFFICIENT BUILDINGS (continued)

Goal	A government facility will be constructed as a demonstration facility in accordance with a leading standard for building energy efficiency and sustainability, such as the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design standard by the year 2015.
Where are we now?	Government partnered with the Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC) to construct the Centre for the Built Environment, which opened in 2010 at the Waterfront Campus in Dartmouth. The College has submitted an application for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Gold status for this building to the Canadian Green Building Council. Approval is still pending. NSCC has adopted the concept of sustainable building and constructing to LEED standards on other projects since this building was constructed. The Province has adopted, where appropriate, LEED standards for new school construction and government buildings. This includes the Bluenose Academy in Lunenburg which opened in March 2012 and was designed to Gold LEED certification standards.

GOAL ✔ ACHIEVED

CONTAMINATED SITES

Building our economy by renewing our land.

Goal	Regulatory tools that use the framework within the *Environment Act* to stimulate redevelopment of contaminated land and contribute to economic development while protecting the environment will be developed by the year 2010.
Where are we now?	The Contaminated Sites Regulations were approved and released in March 2012. The effective date of the regulations is July 2013, allowing time to develop necessary supporting documentation including assessment and remediation protocols, as well as internal and external guidance documents.
What's next?	The Province is in the process of developing this supporting documentation.

GOAL ✔ ACHIEVED

SOLID WASTE

Continuing to be an international leader in solid waste management.

Goal	The solid-waste disposal rate will be no greater than 300 kilograms per person per year by the year 2015 through measures that include the development of new programs and product stewardship regulations.
Where are we now?	In 2011, Nova Scotia's disposal rate was 401 kg/person. The solid waste resource management framework, "Our Path Forward: Building on the success of Nova Scotia's Solid Waste Resource Management Strategy," was released in September 2011. Implementation of the framework is ongoing. Currently 17 materials are banned from disposal in Nova Scotia and eight product stewardship agreements are in place.
What's next?	The Province will continue to research options and alternatives to minimize waste disposal in consultation with key stakeholders.

GOAL IN PROGRESS

SUSTAINABLE PROCUREMENT

Leading the way in the purchase of environmentally and socially responsible goods and services.

Goal	A sustainable procurement policy for the Province will be developed and adopted by the year 2009.
Where are we now?	The Sustainable Procurement Policy was released in August 2009. Implementation is ongoing. A Sustainable Procurement area for government purchasers has been established on the Internal Procurement Website and information for vendors has been added to the Government Tenders website.
What's next?	Additional resources will be added to the site as they become available. The Province will also continue to deliver sustainable procurement awareness sessions and sustainable business sessions for vendors and government suppliers.

GOAL ✔ ACHIEVED

2. Economic Prosperity

The following table highlights some of the key initiatives underway that create jobs and improve our economic performance while increasing our environmental sustainability.

PROJECT	DESCRIPTION
Clean Technology Fund	The fund, which is structured as an early-stage venture capital fund, opened in September 2011. The fund supports the development, demonstration, commercialization, and implementation of innovative clean technologies. **Potential Benefits** • Help to grow the cleantech sector, encouraging innovative, highly-skilled jobs • Support the development of new products for the province and for export
Community Based Feed-in Tariff (COMFIT)	The Community Feed-in Tariff program (http://nsrenewables.ca/feed-tariffs) was launched in September 2011. The program encourages the development of local renewable energy projects by universities, municipalities, First Nations, co-operatives, non-profit groups, and community economic-development corporations. **Potential Benefits** • Improve the diversity of our renewable electricity supply • Improve our energy security
Lower Churchill Falls Project	The large hydroelectric potential in this area can eventually have two sites, Muskrat falls and Gull Island. Muskrat Falls (825 MW) has been announced, and approval applications are being prepared. It would provide clean power through a sub-sea cable for at least 10 per cent of Nova Scotia's electricity needs for 35 years in exchange for building the sub-sea link. **Potential Benefits** • Muskrat Falls project will reduce greenhouse gas output from Nova Scotia electricity by at least 10 per cent • Improve our energy security • A more integrated regional transmission system that supports use of more renewable power

PROJECT	DESCRIPTION
Renewable Electricity Plan	This plan sets out a detailed program to move Nova Scotia away from carbon-based electricity towards greener, more local sources. By 2015, 25 per cent of Nova Scotia's electricity will be supplied by renewable energy sources, and this will increase to 40 per cent by 2020. **Potential Benefits** • Improve the diversity of our renewable electricity supply • Improve our energy security
Strategic Investments	The Province has strategically invested in funding companies that provide both economic and environmental benefits. **Some examples include** • DSME wind turbine production plant in Trenton • Long life, low energy street lighting fixtures — LED Roadway Lighting • Scale up and exporting of wind turbines — Seaforth Energy **Potential Benefits** • Help to grow the green sector, encouraging innovative, highly-skilled jobs • Support the development of new products for the province and export
Sustainable Procurement	This policy outlines procurement practices for government to look beyond the lowest cost and consider the economic, environmental, and social impact of our procurement. **Potential Benefits** • Better overall value from government procurement • Increase local and community benefits from government procurement • Reduce environmental impact for government operations • Improve workplace safety for government staff • Improve local businesses' ability to understand sustainable procurement requirements

PROJECT	DESCRIPTION
Marine Renewable Energy Strategy	The strategy's mission is to be a global leader in the development of technology and systems that produce environmentally sustainable, competitively priced electricity from the ocean. **Potential Benefits** • Improve the diversity of our renewable electricity supply • Improve our energy security • Economic growth in an emerging industry
Cleaner Energy Framework	The framework provides an integrated approach to transitioning Nova Scotia's current energy reality to the one that reduces environmental impacts and enhances economic opportunities, while ensuring security, reliability, and affordability. **Potential Benefits** • Helps to create good jobs and attract investment throughout the province • Sets the path to a sustainable environmental future in energy use • Improve our energy security

Letter from the Round Table

July 13, 2012

Hon. Sterling Belliveau
Minister, Department of Environment
5151 Terminal Road
Halifax, Nova Scotia

Dear Mr. Belliveau:

On behalf of my colleagues on the Round Table on Environment and Sustainable Prosperity, I am pleased to submit our annual assessment of the progress made by the Provincial Government in achieving the goals and targets set out in the *Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act* (EGSPA). This, the fifth year that we have done so, has been particularly challenging for both the Government and Round Table as it coincided with the first five year review of the Act, also mandated and undertaken by the Round Table. The Round Table submitted that Report to you on March 31, on ways to improve the Act especially with regard to its overarching purpose to identify how to best meet EGSPA's objective to fully integrate environmental sustainability and economic prosperity. This effort required much of the Round Table's time and attention as well as the considerable support and contribution of key staff within your Department and others.

We therefore appreciate that this year's annual report has necessarily been condensed to essentials. Nonetheless, the Round Table believes that it does a commendable job of portraying progress and challenges during the past year. After reviewing that document we conclude that the Province continues to make progress in satisfying most of the goals outlined in the Act, even as we both have considered ways to improve the Act in its next iteration. In this letter we are focusing on progress in the current context.

Over the past year, Nova Scotia made notable progress on some of the ongoing EGSPA goals. Two significant strategies were completed, a Natural Resources Strategy and the Wetlands Conservation Policy. Both of these longstanding objectives were accomplished after substantive consultation and assessment processes. As with previously completed EGSPA strategies, the Round Table reiterates its view that completing the strategy is merely the first important step forward. As with other EGSPA strategies, we hope that in future years we will observe active implementation programs and report updates that assess headway towards the strategic objectives. For instance, members of the Round Table are looking forward to a first annual update on the Natural Resources Strategy which is nearly a year since release and still in a critical launch and implementation phase.

The Round Table is also pleased that another long-awaited objective, a regulatory framework for contaminated sites was also introduced in March 2012. These new regulations will encourage the clean-up and redevelopment of contaminated sites, which holds the potential to advance integrated economic and environmental progress — EGSPA's core purpose. We also commend the Department for fulfilling the goal that all septage treatment facilities operating in the province were brought into compliance with the Guidelines for Handling Treatment and Disposal of Septage.

In addition to meeting four additional goals this year, the Round Table is satisfied to see continued efforts toward achieving the remaining seven goals. These include the release of "Our Path Forward: Building on the success of Nova Scotia's Solid Waste Resource Management Strategy" in September 2011, which outlines how the province will further reduce waste and increase recycling, helping to move the Province towards the disposal goal of no more than 300 kilograms per person per year. That said, we note that within the five year review's public consultation one of the most consistent topics of concern was that this goal is particularly challenging for Nova Scotia's municipalities given the burdens they carry to underwrite much of the costs of necessary actions. This leads us to encourage the province to closely consider the prospects to expand the provincial stewardship regimes extending producer responsibility to bear the costs of managing the material outputs of their products and packaging.

Similarly, we are aware that two additional goals are proving difficult to meet fully, largely because of costs for some of our most challenged smaller communities — that wastewater treatment facility discharges will be provided at least primary treatment and that municipal public drinking-water supplies will meet the Province's treatment standards. These goals therefore merit additional scrutiny with an eye to considering the most feasible ways to meet the health and environmental objectives underlying the goals. If adverse municipal and provincial circumstances strain timelines we believe the original goal should be maintained while candidly sharing the dilemma for citizen consideration rather than merely changing the goal thus retaining the appearance of being on target.

The Province is working hard to meet the goal of protecting 12 per cent of our land by 2015. As well as the new additions mentioned in this Report, the government has just designated two new large wilderness areas in Cumberland County and 23 smaller additions to existing Wilderness Areas bringing the total land protected in Nova Scotia to 9.3 per cent. We look forward to the draft plan on reaching the province's 12 per cent goal scheduled in late 2012. Over the past year, Nova Scotia has also continued to make progress reducing our greenhouse gas and air pollution emissions. Among the goals in this sphere we note that the goal regarding mercury emissions, which was revised to defer the 2010 emission target of 65 kg until 2014 to limit the impact on short term power costs, is still facing impediments. We believe that the principal human health objective of this goal is important and encourage the Province and Nova Scotia Power to work collaboratively to lower these emissions even as they work towards an electrical regime that supports economic and environmental progress.

All of these steps forward point to another key Round Table recommendation — that the EGSPA goals not be viewed as static achievements but rather as platforms from which to assess results (including costs and benefits) and consider prospects to make further progress through continuous adjustment and in most cases, improvement. With that in mind the Round Table believes that a progress update should be included for goals and strategies that are already achieved. It is also clear that there are many areas of progress consistent with the objectives of the Act that are not always included in the annual report primarily because they do not explicitly pertain to one of the 21 goals. They involve Departments and stakeholders across all sectors. Some of these advances this year are particularly noteworthy such as the establishment of the Clean Technology Fund, the Community Based Feed-in Tariff (COMFIT) program, the Renewable Electricity Plan, and the Marine Renewable Energy Strategy. In accord with the need to accelerate the economic prosperity side of EGSPA's agenda the Province has also strategically invested in funding companies that provide both economic and environmental benefits such as the DSME wind turbine production plan, in long life, low energy LED street lighting fixtures, and in Seaforth Energy's scale up and exporting of wind turbines. The Round Table continues to believe that all of these worthwhile advances should be encouraged within the broad mandate of EGSPA and recognized within the annual report on the Act's progress. Indeed, if EGSPA's potential is to be realized it will only be because the Act's goal of integrated economic and environmental prosperity is embraced as all-encompassing and every sector's shared responsibility.

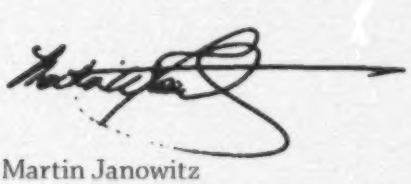
The Round Table therefore appreciates that the overall effort to achieve EGSPA's objectives has been broadly based and has spanned multiple governments. This is laudable and in some ways uniquely Nova Scotian. As we stretch to reach higher we know that the difficulties and costs will continue to challenge us. Therefore the Round Table continues to call for co-equal emphasis on integrated environmental and economic progress, thoughtful assessment of costs and benefits, and sensible strategies and priorities in service of the overall objective — holistic prosperity that includes environmental, economic and social dimensions.

Finally, the Round Table continues to be perplexed about how the citizens of Nova Scotia can be more actively engaged and inspired by the vision if not the details within EGSPA. We know that knowledgeable active citizenship is critical to surmounting the hurdles and realizing the potentials that face us. We also recognize that it is difficult to garner attention much less excitement about topics that on the face of them appear dry in contrast to the headline grabbing incidents that beset us. We believe that succeeding in transcending this enigma is important. The Round Table will work with the Province to explore options to do so such as new ways of reporting and communicating EGSPA's human dimensions. Nonetheless we believe that the annual report on EGSPA is an important element in tracking accountability, progress and challenges. We are glad that the Province has enhanced its ability to do this by instituting a set of high level Indicators of Prosperity — a substantial step forward towards one of the Round Table's longstanding recommendations that we track multi-dimensional components of prosperity and trends over time in Nova Scotia and across Canada. That said, we believe including this indicator data within the EGSPA Annual Report would enrich it and provide

context to evaluate the value and effect of initiatives. If this were to be of optimal use, the indicators would have to be updated in a timely fashion since we note that the 2011 Indicators of Prosperity are the most recent and that some of the data is already several years old.

There are surely some areas where Nova Scotia is a leader in Canada and around the world. Our integrated approach to linking environmental and economic sustainability is one of them. We therefore encourage the Government to persist, to grow this effort and to report on the environmental and economic changes or achievements which have occurred as a result. We look forward to working with you, your colleagues and your Department towards those ends.

Yours sincerely,



Martin Janowitz
Chair

Response from the Minister

July 28, 2011

Mr. Martin Janowitz
Stantec Consulting Ltd.
102-40 Highfield Park Drive
Dartmouth NS B3A 0A3

Dear Mr. Janowitz:

I would like to thank the Round Table on Environment and Sustainable Prosperity for their review of the fifth annual *Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act* (EGSPA) Progress Report. I would also like to thank the Round Table for their work on the first five-year review of EGSPA (the Act) and the report that was submitted to me in March containing recommendations on strengthening the Act. Your recommendations on integrating environmental sustainability and economic prosperity were very insightful and well thought out. I have shared the report with my colleagues and Government is currently working on amendments to the Act.

In your letter you make mention of the importance of implementing strategies that were identified in the Act. I am happy to report that implementation is underway for these strategies. The first progress report for "Water for Life: Nova Scotia's Water Resource Management Strategy" was released in March 2012. New contaminated sites regulations were also released in March, and work is underway to develop supporting documentation for when the regulations take effect in July 2013. Implementation of the wetlands policy is also moving forward and field staff are being trained. "The Path We Share, A Natural Resources Strategy for Nova Scotia, 2011–2020" was released last August and work has already begun on a number of actions.

Wo rk continues on the remaining EGSPA goals. We are working with stakeholders to look for innovative solutions to overcome the challenges of meeting some of the goals. I welcome the Round Table's comments on product stewardship, and want to note that Nova Scotia Environment (NSE) has made product stewardship a goal in "Our Path Forward: Building on the success of Nova Scotia's Solid Waste Resource Management Strategy". The Province will work with partners to develop a product stewardship framework.

I also appreciate the Round Table's comments on the goals for drinking water and wastewater treatment. We will continue to work with municipalities to meet the water and wastewater

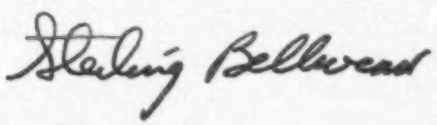
standards. We will also continue to encourage the federal government to expand support for our municipalities so they can better manage the costs of upgrading their facilities.

Like the Round Table, Government believes that the human health objective of the mercury goal is important and as such we continue to work with Nova Scotia Power to help them move toward the target. Although the target was modified in 2010, Nova Scotia Power will be required to make up for any emissions over 65 kgs per year between 2010 and 2014 by 2020.

In your letter you also mention the need to consider how government reports on its progress meeting our EGSPA goals and objectives. We intend to address this when legislative changes are introduced this fall.

The Round Table's dedication and combined expertise provides a unique perspective to government. Once again, I would like to thank each member for your hard work and your continued commitment to sustainable prosperity in the province.

Sincerely,



Sterling Belliveau
Minister

NOVA SCOTIA